

# WHO AM I?

Ephesians



## NO QUICK PRAYERS

### INTRODUCTION

Ephesians 1:15-23

Prayer is hard work! We often struggle with what to say and how to say it. Sometimes it's tough to stay awake when we're praying. Other times we wonder if God is even listening. We may hear a pastor praying and say "I wish I could pray like that." Maybe our prayer life consists of just saying a few words before a meal. God wants our prayer life to be so much more!

True, heartfelt prayer involves opening our hearts before the Lord. We have to focus on Him. We have to believe we are entering the very presence of God. And we have to trust that He hears us and wants to answer our prayers.

Ephesians was written by a man who really knew how to pray. After beginning his letter with praise, the apostle Paul explains how he intentionally prays for the Ephesians. He thanks God for them and begs God to reveal Himself to the church. As Paul explains his prayers for the Ephesians, he shows us what passionate prayer for other people looks like and serves as an example for us.<sup>1</sup>

### OPEN IT

1. What are the top three prayers on your prayer list right now?

### READ IT

**Ephesians 1:15-23**

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<sup>1</sup>Charles R. Swindoll, *Galatians, Ephesians*, Volume 8 (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc, 2015), 174–75.

## EXPLORE IT

2. **Why does Paul “not cease to give thanks” for the Ephesians?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. **What are some of the specific things Paul prays for the Ephesians?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. **What are three things about God that Paul wants the Ephesians to know?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. **What are two ways God revealed His great might?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. **What are some things Jesus is seated “above” in the heavenly places?**

## APPLY IT

Our prayers are often focused on ourselves. We pray for finances, help in relationships, and good health. Paul certainly prayed for himself at times and we should too, but in this portion of Ephesians, he’s praying for others. He’s passionately asking God to build up the Ephesian Christians so they know God’s power and greatness more fully.

7. **Do you notice any differences between your prayers and Paul’s? Write some down.**

**8. What are some ways you are thankful for fellow Christians? Pause for a moment and tell God about this.**

Consider the content of Paul's prayers for the Ephesian Christians. Paul expresses his gratitude for them. He asks God to give these believers wisdom and knowledge. Paul wants their hearts to be enlightened so they can know more about God and His work in the world. In short, Paul is praying for their spiritual lives. He wants these Christians to be drawn closer to Christ and He's asking God to make it happen.

**9. Write down the names of two Christians in your life. What are some specific ways you can pray for them to grow in their relationship to Christ?**

**10. How would your prayers for yourself change if you were praying for others more often?**

Paul very likely did not know all of the Christians in the Ephesian church. Yet, he prayed for them. We have opportunities to pray for Christians in other countries that we will never meet. We can also pray for missionaries that VBC supports, even though we will never see their work firsthand and may never get a chance to talk with them one-on-one. However, like Paul, we have a chance to ask almighty God to be at work in the lives of His people in places that are hundreds or even thousands of miles away from us.

**11. If you could pick one country that you'd like to pray for, especially the Christians there, where would it be and why?**

**12. What are some ways you can pray for Christians and missionaries in that country?**

Read verses 18-23 slowly. These verses express glorious truths about Christ and the inheritance we have in Him as God's dearly loved daughters and sons. "What is our inheritance? It is the promise of salvation and eternity with God. This inheritance comes to us through our new birth in Christ. Paul tells us elsewhere that as God's adopted children, we are co-heirs with Christ (Romans 8:16). Peter tells us that this inheritance is one that can never perish, 'He has given us new birth into a living inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you' (1 Peter 1:4). This kind of prayer seeks to know and better understand our salvation and what God has done for us through Christ."<sup>2</sup>

**13. Explain how knowing that you have inherited a glorious future in Christ should affect the content of your prayers.**

**14. How should the fact that God raised Christ from the dead and seated Him at His right hand impact your prayer life?**

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<sup>2</sup> Christina Fox, <https://cbmw.org/2014/10/30/a-lesson-on-prayer-ephesians-115-23/> (Accessed on 12/8/22)

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